Violence against Christians

412. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that for the last three years, there have been repeated incidents of violence against Christians in which Churches are burnt, priest are murdered, nuns are raped and recently bombs exploded in Christian places of worship and Churches;

(b) whether inspite of repeated reports and pleas, this type of criminal activities continue; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to curb these activities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) There has been some isolated incidents of violence and bomb blasts aimed at Christians and their institutions in the recent past in some parts of the country. Most of incidents, however, relate to law and order and crime.

(b) and (c) With the coordinated efforts of the Central and the State Governments (who are primarily concerned with law and order as per Schedule VII, List-II, State List of the Constitution of India) this trend has been contained and the culprits behind some of the bomb blasts have been arrested.

The Central Government shares intelligence inputs, and sends alert messages and advisories to the States from time to time. Revised Guidelines for the Promotion of Communal Harmony have been issued in October 1997. The Central Para-Military Forces are made available on specific requests and a special force called the Rapid Action Force has been deployed to deal exclusively with communal violence. Assistance is provided for the modernization of the State Police Forces.

A High level meeting was convened to review the situation on 4.7.2000 and the State Governments were requested to provide security to the minorities and their institutions and to deal firmly with the perpetrators of violence against them.

Constitutional Amendment to Accommodate D.G.H.C.

413. SHRI DAWA LAMA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received recommendations of the Government

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of West Bengal with regard to Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council *vide* their letter No. 243-H dated 8th June, 2000;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) whether Government would agree to amend Sixth Schedule of the constitution to accommodate Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) to (c) Government of West Bengal *vide* their letter dated 8th June, 2000, have apprised the Central Government of the action taken by the State Government, on the basis of discussions held with the Chairman and Chief Executive Councillor, Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council, in July, 1999. The Government of West Bengal are yet to move the Government of India on the specific recommendations of the Committee appointed by the State Government for the purpose.

Escalation in Anti-Christian Violence

414. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item as appeared in "The Hindustan Times" dated the 10th June, 2000 captioned "Archbishop denounces growing violence against Christians in Capital";

(b) if so, whether Government have ascertained the fact that there has been escalation in anti-christian violence in several parts of the country;

(c) whether there have been bomb blasts at churches in Andhra Pradesh, Goa and Karnataka on the 8th June, 2000; and

(d) if so, what steps Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The position has been ascertained from the concerned State Governments and it has been found that the incidents of violence involving Christians and their institutions have recnetly taken place in some parts of the country. Which incidents by and large relate to law and order/crime.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Although as per the provision of the VIIth Schedule List-II, State List of the Constitution of India, Law and Order is a State subject, yet the Central Government has been sharing intelligence inputs and sending advisories and